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tells us that the American Indian chief was in a state of great alarm lest his soul might be carried off with his picture. A notion of the same kind appears in the Chinese custom of getting a priest to put in the pupil of the eye, a method which often has rather a ghastly effect when the reverend gentleman is not skilful. Similarly, every Chinese-owned craft, from the sampan to the English-built iron screw steamer, has a couple of eyes painted on its bows, in order that it may see the way. Down in the Straits, and in all places where there are many Chinese, the local steamers, whoever their owners may be, are all endowed with eyes. Were they not so favoured, no Chinaman would travel with them as a passenger, or send any of his goods aboard of them. The Burman is not troubled with any such fantastic notions, and has no objection whatever to sitting for his portrait, only, as King Mindôn said to Yule, they prefer a flattering likeness to an exact one. It is seldom, however, that a Burman has a picture gallery in his house, and the village artist usually confines himself to vivid-coloured sketches for the funeral of a pôngyi, or to be hung round the mandut, where the great people sit to look on at a play. The drawing and the perspective are naturally a little faulty, but the details are usually worked out with very creditable skill.

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Thus wandering about, seeing what his neighbours are doing, with an occasional visit to the monastery to have some edifying talk with the religious, the villager may spend the time very comfortably. Oftenest however, he stays at home, and waits for visitors to drop in and have a little gossip. The goodwife always has a little shop in the lower part of the building. There is hardly a single house in the whole village where something is not offered for sale: a few dried fish, betel-nut, with the fresh green leaves, lime, cardamoms, and cutch, all ready for making up, half a dozen cocoa-nuts, or perhaps some twopenny-ha'penny knives, looking-glasses, coloured tumblers, and paltry Manchester goods, or where there are many girls about the house, a few home-made lungyis and pasos, waist-cloths, woven at odd times in the loom which stands in the yard or in a corner of the verandah of every house. The stock-in-trade is

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which was devastating the country of Wethali. If this last ceremony is not effectual the village is abandoned. The inhabitants leave the sick and the dying to their fate, and go off to the jungle, where each household camps out by itself for a time. Before they return again, the yellow-robed monks, in recognition of much alms, read the Law up and down the street between the houses. When they have gone back to the monastery, the nat's shrine is repaired, and abundant offerings deposited. Having thus made their peace with the representatives of both religions, the people return to their houses, light fires, cook rice for new offerings, and then enter upon their ordinary pursuits as if no interruption whatever had occurred.

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This is what would take place in any ordinary Burman village. But among the Talaings, and in the more retired places in the jungle, occupied by ignorant uncultivated Burmans, the function called ywakyathi would be carried out, which is much more purely geniolatric in its character. This is sometimes done when a prominent man in the hamlet is sick, more often when there is danger of a contagious disease. A great feast of cooked rice and meat, roasted fowls and ducks forming a prominent part of it, is heaped up on a platform specially erected for the purpose some distance outside the village. Everybody in the village is required to have some part in the ceremony. A few are sent out beforehand, who dress themselves up in a fantastic way, and pretend to be bilus, evil nats, and witches. With them are others who feign to be dogs, and rush about on all fours, barking and howling; others represent pigs, and grunt and nuzzle about with their noses in the ground. After this performance has been carried on for some time, the remainder of the villagers come out in a band, and, through one or more spokesmen, demand of the possessed whether those lying sick at home will recover, and whether the bad spirits are satisfied with the offerings. It is specially ordained at these exhibitions that no one shall be called by his real name; such mention, if made inadvertently, would expose the person addressed to considerable danger, even if he should make no sign betraying himself, for he certainly would not answer. The quasi tasés always reply that the

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sick will recover and the plague leave the locality. Thereupon the villagers rush off like madmen into the surrounding forest, and run about hither and thither in a reckless way with an open cloth, or the end of their waistcloth, in their hands. Some of them suddenly make a plunge with their cloth over a bush or a tussock of grass, and then closing it up carefully, hurry breathless back to the village. The leip-bya or "butterflies" of the sick man are supposed to have been captured. The paso, or cloth, is carefully opened and shaken over the patient's head, and the leip-bya is supposed to return to its proper habitation. This operation is repeated several times, in case a wrong "butterfly" might have been captured, or lest the actual one should have escaped on the way. Then everybody returns. The function is not without its danger, for it has happened that the [754] temporary mimes have become permanently possessed of evil spirits, and as witches and wizards have proved as great curses to the neighbourhood as any pestilence could have been. Which things are an allegory. The whole ceremony [178] is beginning to get into very bad odour in the more settled parts of the province, and respectable people avoid having anything to do with it, while those who have taken a part are ashamed to own it.

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All these nats are directly connected with a particular locality, and therefore well known to, and regularly propitiated by, the inhabitants of that place. But there are abundance of nats to be found elsewhere, away from villages and houses, and all of them equally ready to resent any injury which the passer-by may unwittingly do them. When a Burman starts on a journey he hangs a bunch of plantains, or a twig of the tha-bye tree, on the pole of the buffalo cart or the stern of the boat, to conciliate any spirit whose beat he may intrude upon. The fisherman makes offerings in his nat-sin every time he launches his dug-out; the lonely hunter in the forest deposits some rice and ties together a few leaves whenever he comes across some particularly large and imposing tree, lest there might be a thi'pin-saung nat dwelling there. Should there be none, the tied-back twigs will at any rate stand in evidence to the taw-saung nat, the demon who presides over all the forest.

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of the seitathit, or results immediately connected with ideas, throughout all the five stages of meditation up to upekka, lead to rewards in the twenty superior heavens, where the contemplative gradually frees himself from the thanya, or false persuasions, and acquires a contempt for matter.

All this action has its place in the manaw, or the seat of knowledge, and is duly explained to the Burman when he is in the monastery school, and afterwards, perhaps, in discourses of the Yahans in the rest-houses on feast-days, or other suitable occasions. Unfortunately, however, the matter is, to say the least, a little obscure, and not by any means easily to be grasped. Accordingly, the superstitious Burman having got a confused lot of big words into his head, after letting them simmer there for a while, evolved from his internal consciousness the notion of the leip-bya, or butterfly spirit.

This personation of the soul in a fairy-like form had natural elements of attractiveness in it; and the consequence is that the error of the unphilosophical Burman long ago has grown into a present national belief, and it is universally accepted that the life of man resides in the leip-bya and dies when it disappears. The man at the point of death opens his mouth and the butterfly escapes from the body, but only to die at the same time. Many strange things are explained by this doctrine. For example, the leip-bya is the cause of dreams. It is not absolutely necessary that the butterfly should remain constantly in the body; death will not necessarily ensue from the separation. When the man is asleep, therefore, it leaves the body and roams about far and wide. But in these wanderings it can only go to such places as a person to whom it belongs has previously been in. A straying from known paths would cause extreme danger to the sleeping body, for it might happen that the butterfly would lose its way and never return, and then both would die—the body because the animating principle was gone, the leip-bya because it had no earthly tenement to live in. The butterfly is enabled to perform these journeys through its existence as thwe seit, or soul of the blood; and it is the state of this blood which makes the leip-bya more or less inclined to roam, and directs its movements. If the

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774 827 blood is feverish or excited in any way, the butterfly necessarily becomes restless, and wanders about more or less rapidly and into more or less strange places, according to the degree of perturbation. Therefore it happens that the soul thus existing in itself, and straying or flying at random, sees extremely strange and fantastic visions on these voyages. An elaboration of this notion divides dreams into three special varieties: those which occur at the beginning of sleep, those about midnight, and those in the early morning; or the false, the mixed, and the true. Bedin-sayās and wise women are for this reason always very particular in their inquiries as to the precise time at which the dream occurred. If they foretell wrongly it is, of course, because the questionist made a mistake as to the time when his vision appeared to him.

774 776 These night wanderings of the butterfly spirit are not without their dangers. In addition to other hobgoblins and spectres, Burma is especially plagued by evil spirits called bilus—creatures in human guise who devour men. If they will eat the corporate man, there is small doubt what will happen to the fragile butterfly spirit should it come across such an ogre. Cases do happen when the leip-bya is gulped down, and then the man has slept his last sleep. More often, however, it is only a case of leip-bya lan; the soul is scared, and in its terror sometimes runs into unknown regions, from which it is unable to retrace its steps, when of course it dies and with it the owner; or it rushes home to its bodily dwelling-place with such precipitation that the whole system is disorganised and sickness follows. This butterfly theory, therefore, offers a grand field for quack doctors, of whom there are unfortunately a very large number in Burma. When a man falls ill they dose him with all the drugs and simples they have in their little bamboo phials. If he does not get better after taking even the fungus from the roots of the bamboo, culled in the eclipse, or vegetable soot prepared at the change of the moon, then there can be only one opinion; the leip-bya has had its system shaken by some ghoulish sight; or perhaps it is being kept in durance vile by some tasé, some demon (in the sense of the Greek *δαίμων*), or by a sôn, a wizard. In this case no bodily medicine can be of any use, were it even that celebrated

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nostrum, the green powder, which contains 160 different ingredients. A witch doctor must be called in, and he resorts to the leip-bya hkaw. This ceremony is very much like that made use of in ordinary cases of oppression by evil genii, nat-sos, and witches. Offerings are laid outside the house, or perhaps outside the village, at night—heaps of cooked rice, bananas, salt fish, and other eatables; and the malevolent being, whether ghostly tasé or material witch, is begged to eat this rice instead of the butterfly spirit, and to let the prisoner free. Few are hardy enough to watch and see what happens; but the few who have done so agree in the discovery that the demon appears in the shape of a pariah dog, which does not differ from other pariah dogs in spirit, inasmuch as it will run away if you throw stones at it. The offerings are repeated till a change takes place. Perhaps the tasé is greedy, eats offerings, leip-bya, and all, and kills the man. Perhaps it is appeased. Then the butterfly spirit returns safe to its owner again, and convalescence sets in. This is called leip-bya win. Bilus are never successfully negotiated with in this way; they are too voracious. They occasionally appear in broad daylight upon earth; but may always be recognised, since they have red eyes and cast no shadow.

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A particularly difficult operation is to separate two leip-byas that were intimately united in life. This is especially the case when a mother has died leaving a little infant. If the leip-bya kwè is not resorted to, the butterfly of the little one will follow the mother, and the child will die. A wise woman is therefore called in. She murmurs some mantras, and then places a looking-glass on the floor near the corpse. Still muttering, but with more and more rapid gesticulation, she drops a filmy shred of cotton down on the face of the mirror, and with frenzied words entreats the dead mother not to retain the infant soul, but let it come back to its earthly tenement. The fleecy down slowly slips down the mirror face and falls off into the handkerchief she holds below, and is then gently placed on the breast of the child. A similar ceremony is occasionally gone through when a husband or wife is more than usually overcome by the death of the yoke-fellow.

The whole notion is of course foreign to Buddhism, and

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774 791 795 The whole notion is of course foreign to Buddhism, and is viewed with great disfavour by the members of the sacred assembly, but they are no more able to put a stop to it than they are to suppress nat-worship in the subsidiary form in which it still exists. It is somewhat discouraging to those who have the welfare of the people at heart; yet still when one comes to highly civilised countries such as are found in Europe and finds ghosts only a little less demonstratively believed in, a load is removed. The world is very small after all.

774 The leip-bya idea, like a good many other peculiarities of the Burmese, occasionally gets them into trouble with foreigners. It is the cause of the great unwillingness all Burmans have to wake a sleeping man. It is obvious from the above explanation of the character of the leip-bya, that it would be highly injurious to rouse a man suddenly from his slumbers. His butterfly might be wandering far from the body, and probably would not have time to hurry back to its tenement. Then the man would certainly fall sick, or at any rate would be indisposed for a time. Consequently, it is useless to tell a Burman servant to wake you at a certain hour. He will come in at the appointed time and look wistfully at you, and wish something would fall down and make a noise; but he himself will tread as softly as a housebreaker, and will not even have the heart to instigate somebody outside to make a disturbance. The Englishman has not got "humanity," it is true; he has not been in a monastery, and is therefore not really a "man"; but there is no knowing but what he might have a leip-bya for all that. Consequently the master is not wakened, and gets up an hour and a half after he wanted to, and storms at the poor Burman for a lazy scoundrel who snores away till the sun is as high in the sky as the pagoda spire, let alone a tari palm.

The same thing occurs out in the country villages. An English assistant commissioner rides unexpectedly into a small towolet in his subdivision and calls for the headman. That worthy is having his afternoon siesta, and the good wife announces this with a composure which almost surprises the young sub-janta wallah into swearing. He says, "Well, then, wake him, and tell him to bring his accounts along to the traveller's bungalow." Old Ma Gyi shudders

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at the very thought, and flatly refuses. The Englishman gallops off in a fury at the d—readful impertinence of the people, and Ma Gyi calls together all her gossips to hear of the brutality of the young wundauk, who actually wanted her to imperil her goodman's life. It needs something more than passing examinations and being a smart report-writer to govern the people well.

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CHAPTER IV

THE WAY TO THE GREAT PEACE

'Come to Me: I teach a doctrine which leads to deliverance from all the miseries of life.'—*Saying of the Buddha.*

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To understand the teaching of Buddhism, it must be remembered that to the Buddhist, as to the Brahmin, man's soul is eternal.

In other faiths and other philosophies this is not so. There the soul is immortal; it cannot die, but each man's soul appeared newly on his birth. Its beginning is very recent.

To the Buddhist the beginning as well as the end is out of our ken. Where we came from we cannot know, but certainly the soul that appears in each newborn babe is not a new thing. It has come from everlasting, and the present life is merely a scene in the endless drama of existence. A man's identity, the sum of good and of evil tendencies, which is his soul, never dies, but endures for ever. Each body is but a case wherein the soul is enshrined for the time.

And the state of that soul, whether good predominate in it or evil, is purely dependent on that soul's thoughts and actions in time past.

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Men are not born by chance wise or foolish, righteous or wicked, strong or feeble. A man's condition in life is the absolute result of an eternal law that as a man sows so shall he reap; that as he reaps so has he sown.

Therefore, if you find a man's desires naturally given towards evil, it is because he has in his past lives educated himself to evil. And if he is righteous and charitable, long-suffering and full of sympathy, it is because in his past existence he has cultivated these virtues; he has followed goodness, and it has become a habit of his soul.

Thus is every man his own maker. He has no one to blame for his imperfections but himself, no one to thank for his virtues but himself. Within the unchangeable laws of righteousness each man is absolutely the creator of himself and of his own destiny. It has lain, and it lies, within each man's power to determine what manner of man he shall be. Nay, it not only lies within his power to do so, but a man *must* actually mould himself. There is no other way in which he can develop.

Every man has had an equal chance. If matters are somewhat unequal now, there is no one to blame but himself. It is within his power to retrieve it, not perhaps in this short life, but in the next, maybe, or the next.

Man is not made perfect all of a sudden, but takes time to grow, like all valuable things. You might as well expect to raise a teak-tree in your garden in a night as to make a righteous man in a day. And thus not only is a man the sum of his passions, his acts and his thoughts, in past time,

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but he is in his daily life determining his future—what sort of man he shall be. Every act, every thought, has its effect, not only upon the outer world, but upon the inner soul. If you follow after evil, it becomes in time a habit of your soul. If you follow after good, every good act is a beautifying touch to your own soul.

Man is as he has made himself; man will be as he makes himself. This is a very simple theory, surely. It is not at all difficult to understand the Buddhist standpoint in the matter. It is merely the theory of evolution applied to the soul, with this difference: that in its later stages it has become a deliberate and a conscious evolution, and not an unconscious one.

The deduction from this is also simple. It is true, says Buddhism, that every man is the architect of himself, that he can make himself as he chooses. Now, what every man desires is happiness. As a man can form himself as he will, it is within his power to make himself happy, if he only knows how. Let us therefore carefully consider what happiness is, that we may attain it; what misery is, that we may avoid it.

It is a commonplace of many religions, and of many philosophies—nay, it is the actual base upon which they have been built, that this is an evil world.

Mahommedanism, indeed, and Judaism thought that the world was really a capital place, and that it was worth while doing well in order to enjoy it. But most other faiths thought very differently. Indeed, the very meaning of most religions and philosophies has been that they should be refuges

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but where reigns unutterable peace. It is not death, but the Great Peace.

> 'Ever pure, and mirror bright and even,
> Life among the immortals glides away;
> Moons are waning, generations changing,
> Their celestial life flows everlasting,
> Changeless 'midst a ruined world's decay.'

This is Nirvana, the end to which we must all strive, the only end that there can be to the trouble of the world. Each man must realize this for himself, each man will do so surely in time, and all will come into the haven of rest. Surely this is a simple faith, the only belief that the world has known that is free from mystery and dogma, from ceremony and priestcraft; and to know that it is a beautiful faith you have but to look at its believers and be sure. If a people be contented in their faith, if they love it and exalt it, and are never ashamed of it, and if it exalts them and makes them happy, what greater testimony can you have than that?

It will seem that indeed I have compressed the teaching of this faith into too small a space—this faith about which so many books have been written, so much discussion has taken place. But I do not think it is so. I cannot see that even in this short chapter I have left out anything that is important in Buddhism. It is such a simple faith that all may be said in a very few words. It would be, of course, possible to refine on and gloze over certain points of the teaching. The real proof of the faith is in the results, in the deeds that men do in its name. Discussion will not alter these one way or another.

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the exceptions, but no. Perhaps he is too rare to excite such fierce and deadly hate as makes the Burman forget his law and kill the viper. However it may be, the Burman is not ready to kill the hamadryad. A few weeks ago a friend of mine and myself came across two little Burman boys carrying a jar with a piece of broken tile over it. The lads kept lifting up the tile and peeping in, and then putting the tile on again in a great hurry, and their actions excited our curiosity. So we called them to come to us, and we looked into the jar. It was full of baby hamadryads. The lads had found a nest of them in the absence of the mother, who would have killed them if she had been there, and had secured all the little snakes. There were seven of them.

We asked the boys what they intended to do with the snakes, and they answered that they would show them to their friends in the village. 'And then?' we asked. And then they would let them go in the water. My friend killed all the hamadryads on the spot, and gave the boys some coppers, and we went on. Can you imagine this happening anywhere else? Can you think of any other schoolboys sparing any animal they caught, much less poisonous snakes? The extraordinary hold that this tenet of their religion has upon the Burmese must be seen to be understood. What I write will sound like some fairy story, I fear, to my people at home. It is far beneath the truth. The belief that it is wrong to take life is a belief with them as strong as any belief could be. I do not know anywhere any command, earthly or heavenly, that is acted up to with such earnestness as this command

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